

HOUSE No. 2830

By Ms. St. Fleur of Boston, petition of Thomas M. Menino and others for legislation to establish a program for expanding youth and family services during out-of-school times. Children and Families.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Thomas M. Menino	Elizabeth A. Malia
Marie P. St. Fleur	Martha M. Walz
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In the Year Two Thousand and Five.

AN ACT TO DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF AFTER-SCHOOL AND OUT OF SCHOOL TIME SERVICES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. It is the purpose of this legislation to create in the
2 Commonwealth a coordinated system of out of school time serv-
3 ices for school-age children and youth and their families. This
4 system shall respond to the needs of individual communities and
5 shall support both the expansion of out of school time programs
6 and quality improvement in such programs.

1 SECTION 2. As contained herein, the following words shall
2 have the noted meanings:

3 “School-age children” shall include all children who are eli-
4 gible to begin the first grade in public school at the beginning of
5 the next school year up to age 14, including those children in non-
6 public school.

7 “Youth” shall include children from age 14 through age 18,
8 including those with special needs until their 22nd birthday, and
9 including those children in non-public schools and those who are
10 and who are not at risk as defined in this Section.

11 “Out of school time services” shall be defined as comprehen-
12 sive programs at the community level supporting the cognitive,

13 social, emotional, cultural and physical development of school-
14 age children and youth during non-school hours, including before
15 and after school, weekends, vacations and holidays.

16 “At risk” children and youth shall include, but not be limited to,
17 children and youth whose social, cognitive, physical, or affective
18 development could be adversely impacted as a result of any one or
19 combination of the following factors: poverty, unstable or crim-
20 inal behavior in the household, truancy, homelessness, history of
21 court involvement or ongoing involvement in the Department of
22 Social Services and Youth Services, low academic achievement,
23 illness, or disability.

1 SECTION 3. There is hereby established the Massachusetts
2 Commission on Out of School Time, hereafter referred to as the
3 Commission. The Commission shall advise and make recommen-
4 dations to the Governor and the General Court of ways to better
5 coordinate, expand, finance and improve the current system of
6 services delivered by the Commonwealth to school-age children
7 and youth and their families. The Commission shall:

8 1.) Create an interagency coordinating council to increase the
9 coordination and efficiency of existing after-school and out of
10 school time, the membership of which shall consist of representa-
11 tives from all state agencies involved in the administration or
12 funding of such programs, including but not limited to, the Office
13 of Child Care Services, the Department of Education, the Execu-
14 tive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of
15 Youth Services, the Department of Social Services, the Depart-
16 ment of Public Health, the Department of Mental Health, and the
17 Executive Office of Public Safety,

18 2.) review and consolidate existing data on the effectiveness of
19 out of school time and youth development programs in Massachu-
20 setts, and raise the visibility and public awareness of such pro-
21 grams,

22 3.) provide information regarding state and local level systems,
23 financing and administration, and the provision of out of school
24 time and youth development services in other states, and dissemi-
25 nate information about effective programs and best practices, and

26 4.) Seek input from state and local providers of such services,
27 families of children and youth in the Commonwealth, and other
28 invested in out of school time and youth development services.

1 SECTION 4. There shall be a grant program to support com-
2 prehensive and collaborative school-age and youth development
3 services. Funds distributed under the program established in this
4 section may be used for direct grants to include:

5 (1) subsidies or scholarships for school-age children and youth
6 to participate in out of school time services;

7 (2) activities to increase the supply of out of school time serv-
8 ices for school-age children and youth, with the exception of facil-
9 ities construction or major renovation;

10 (3) activities to increase programs' inclusion of individuals
11 with physical or emotional disabilities, including facilities modifi-
12 cation and equipment;

13 (4) activities or technical support related to the pursuit of
14 accreditation by the National School Age Care Alliance or other
15 age appropriate formal measures of quality improvement;

16 (5) professional development activities for out of school time
17 program staff, including training or higher education;

18 (6) program evaluation; and

19 (7) other resources to meet the identified out of school time
20 needs of families.

21 Each application for funds shall be preceded by a needs assess-
22 ment and shall respond to the needs identified. Plans shall be eval-
23 uated and approved based on the following criteria:

24 (1) address the needs of all children and youth in the commu-
25 nity, including those who are at risk,

26 (2) demonstrate broad community collaboration,

27 (3) include effective strategies for ensuring equal access and
28 services for individuals with disabilities,

29 (4) maximize the use of community capital resources, including
30 but not limited to public schools, non-public schools, and property
31 held by community based organizations and faith-based organiza-
32 tions, and

33 (5) include provisions to provide continuity and transition
34 between services funded for school-age children up to age 12 and
35 youth ages 14 and older.

36 Applications shall include the following:

37 (1) a statement of need;

38 (2) a detailed description of priorities, needs, and existing
39 resources;

40 (3) a description of goals, objectives, and strategies related to
41 fulfilling those needs;

42 (4) an evaluation plan, including a plan for reporting on the
43 community's success in meeting its goals and objectives as
44 defined by the council;

45 (5) a plan for aiding direct service providers in working toward
46 the grant program's quality improvement standards described in
47 subsection (9) of this section, and documenting program and
48 youth and child-based outcomes; and

49 (6) a description of and documentation of outreach to entities
50 and individuals.

51 Programs receiving resources for direct services to either
52 school-age children or to youth under the two sections of the com-
53 munity grant program shall be required to work toward and show
54 annual progress toward a comprehensive program quality stan-
55 dard.

56 (1) The program standard shall be based on and draw from
57 existing program standards, including:

58 (i.) The National School Age Care Alliance accreditation
59 system;

60 (ii.) The YMCA's of the USA Quality Check;

61 (iii.) The Boys and Girls Clubs of America's Commitment to
62 Quality; and

63 (iv.) other established national, state, and local level program
64 standard models.

65 (2) The program standard shall include provisions regarding
66 key elements of school-age child care and youth development pro-
67 gram quality, including but not limited to:

68 (i.) Staff education, training, core competencies, and/or creden-
69 tialing;

70 (ii.) Indoor and outdoor space and facilities, when appropriate;

71 (iii.) Health and nutrition;

72 (iv.) Enrichment, physical, recreational, and academic activi-
73 ties;

74 (v.) Staff and child interaction;

75 (vi.) Program management and administration;

76 (vii.) Family and community involvement;

77 (viii.) Youth participation in planning, goal setting, and deci-
78 sion-making; and

79 (ix.) A plan for the regular use of a program assessment or
80 evaluation tool.

1 SECTION 5. Workforce Development System.

2 The Commission will develop a workforce development system
3 designed to support the education, training, and compensation of
4 school-age providers. The workforce development system shall
5 include the following:

6 (1) An inventory of the current resources and systems available
7 for workforce and professional development in the commonwealth
8 to include trainings, community-based trainings, higher education
9 programs, resource and referral agency trainings, state and feder-
10 ally funded workforce development trainings/programs, public
11 school system trainings/credentialing, and other trainings that
12 address the needs of those who work with children, and the rec-
13 ommendations for coordinating the use of those existing resources
14 and systems;

15 (2) A review of the type, scope and range of children and youth
16 workers who could potentially benefit from participating in the
17 workforce development system;

18 (3) Analyses and data about the current status of the early edu-
19 cation and care workforce, including education preparation,
20 training, opportunities, salaries, benefits, and workplace stan-
21 dards;

22 (4) Guidelines for [a] career ladder(s) representing salaries and
23 benefits that suitably compensate professionals, tied to creden-
24 tials, and with incentives for advancement, including a salary
25 enhancement program;

26 (5) A mandatory and regularly updated professional develop-
27 ment and qualification registry;

28 (6) Incentives and supports for early education and care profes-
29 sionals to seek additional training and education, such as scholar-
30 ships, loan forgiveness connected to a term of service in the field,
31 credit for prior learning experiences, career counseling and men-
32 toring, release time and substitutes;

33 (7) Core competencies (a common and shared body of knowl-
34 edge) for all those working in the early education and care fields;

35 (8) Agreements among higher education institutions for an
36 articulated system of education, training, and professional devel-
37 opment in early education and care;

38 (9) Streamlined and coordinated state certification, creden-
39 tialing and training within the early education and care fields
40 including OCCS teacher certification, the Child Development
41 Associate (CDA) training, current public school teacher certifica-
42 tion, and other state approved director, teacher, and provider cre-
43 dentialing requirements as they are phased in over time;

44 (10) Approval of training programs and academic coursework,
45 incentives for AA and BA programs to meet best practices and to
46 modify curriculums to reflect current child development research,
47 and certification of trainers and teachers of said programs and
48 coursework established pursuant to this act;

49 (11) Efforts to ensure a range of training opportunities that
50 would provide appropriate coursework for family child care as
51 well as center-based providers;

52 (12) Strategies to recruit and retain individuals into the early
53 education and care workforce who reflect the ethnic, racial, lin-
54 guistic, and cultural diversity of Massachusetts families based on
55 the most recent census data;

56 (13) Training programs that are provided in languages other
57 than English, and incorporation of such programs into any
58 broader, articulated system that is developed;

59 (14) New public and private resources to support the workforce
60 development system and coordinating existing workforce
61 resources among public agencies; and

62 (15) A data collection and evaluation system for the purposes
63 of ensuring that said workforce and professional development
64 activities established pursuant to this act are meeting established
65 standards of quality and are having the desired effect on recruit-
66 ment, retention and quality of the workforce (e.g., a longitudinal
67 study to demonstrate the changes in rates of recruitment and reten-
68 tion of early education and care teachers and providers).